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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
13 September 1962

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Analysis of the Suspect Missile Site at
Banes, Cuba

1. A review of all available evidence leads us to conclude it is highly likely that the suspect missile site near Banes, Cuba is a facility for launching cruise missiles against ship targets at fairly close ranges.
2. The site, which is located about 300 feet above sea level and 3.5 nm from the sea is oriented in a general easterly (seaward) direction. It consists of two 30 foot rail launchers in revetments, each connected by cable to a Soviet Whiff tracking radar. Ground support equipment consists of eight canvas-covered, missile-type trailers, two probable generators and electronic vans, and other general purpose vehicles. The area is being fenced, and the personnel are housed in tents. The site configuration and the equipment observed are compatible with a cruise missile system and not compatible with surface-to-air or ballistic systems.
3. Although our knowledge of Soviet cruise missiles is incomplete, we know of three systems which could fit those facilities observed at Banes. We have eliminated other operational Soviet cruise missile systems, with ranges from 1000 to 4000 nm, because their missiles probably would be too large for the Banes facility. A 600 nm cruise missile has had a test range firing in the USSR, but it too would be too large for the Banes site.

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4. The three remaining possibilities are:

- a. SS-N-1-- a destroyer-launched cruise anti-ship homing missile launched from 30 foot inclined rails. With destroyer radar, the effective system range is 20 to 30 nm. With the assistance of an air controller, the system range can be extended to 130 nm. This system could be installed at a shore site.
- b. SS-N-2-- a Komar class patrol craft-launched cruise anti-ship homing missile, launched from inclined rails 25 to 30 feet long. With the Komar radar, the effective system range is 10 to 15 nm. This system could also be installed at a shore site. Eight KOMARS have been transferred to Cuba.
- c. SS-C-1-- the "missile-in-a-bottle", first shown in the 1961 Moscow 7 November parade. This missile is launched from an inclined ramp within a tube mounted on a large four axle truck. We know nothing of its guidance system. The missile probably has a range of about 150 nm, but possibly it could be as much as 300 nm. This system could be installed at a fixed site.

5. Although none of the known Soviet cruise missile systems precisely fit the facility at Banes, we believe it is more likely that the site is for a short range 25-30 NM missile system. The Whiff radar seen at the site has not been noted with known cruise missile systems but could be used for target acquisition in this installation. If the missile has an inertial guidance system and a means of target acquisition, the range of the missile at the Banes site could be extended to a range of about 130 nm.

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6. There are several items of circumstantial evidence which tend to support the conclusion that the Banes site is for relatively short range coastal defense cruise missiles. The fact that the site is near the coast suggests that the range of its missile is short; otherwise it could be located inland in a less vulnerable area. It is located where short-range missiles could defend against seaborne assault on deep water ports in Nipe Bay south of Banes.* Thus far, the Soviets apparently have not given Cuba any weapons which provide them a long range striking capability, suggesting that their policy is to provide for Cuba's defense only. Because neither the SS-N-1 nor the SS-C-1 has sufficient range to hit any target in the United States, such missiles would fit this policy pattern.

7. If the analysis that the Banes missile site is a coastal defense installation is correct, it would follow that similar facilities may be set up at a number of other locations favorable for protecting beaches against amphibious attack.

8. We doubt that Cubans have been given sufficient training in the use of such missiles to allow them to have operational control over the sites. It seems likely that Soviet technical training personnel would be needed for some time to come and would be available for operating the installation in time of crisis.

* Cuba's two nickel plants are in this general area. Their output is being sent to the Soviet Bloc and is equivalent to 20 percent of Soviet production. The more important of these two plants is on the bay protected by the Banes site.